

Message Text

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ORIGIN SS-15

INFO OCT-01 CCO-00 RSC-01 FILE-01 SSO-00 ADP-00 /018 R

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DRAFTED BY: S/ S- O: WNEWLIN

APPROVED BY: S/ S- O: WNEWLIN

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O 180915 Z MAY 73 ZFF4

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY BOGOTA IMMEDIATE

UNCLAS STATE 095281

TOSEC 122

FOL SENT ACTION SECSTATE WASHDC MAY 18, 1973 FROM USUN NEW YORK
REPEATED TO YOU QUOTE

UNCLAS USUN 1875

E. O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: OPERATIONS CENTER FOR SECRETARY'S PARTY OVIP

(ROGERS WILLIAM P)

SUBJECT: NEW YORK TIMES SUMMARY MAY 18

THE OPENING OF THE SENATE WATERGATE HEARINGS WITH THREE- COLUMN
PICTURES OF THE PROCEEDINGS DOMINATED PAGE ONE OF THE NEW
YORK TIMES MAY 18. THE TWO COLUMN HEADLINE, " HEARING IS
TOLD THAT MAGRUDER HAD FILE MOVED" BEGAN A LENGTHY ACCOUNT
OF TESTIMONY BY PRESIDENTIAL CAMPAIGN OFFICIAL ROBERT ODLE
ABOUT THE BACKGROUND PARTICULAR ASPECTS OF THE DRAMA.
ANOTHER HEADLINE CALLED IT A " LOW- KEY BEGINNING" AND
VOLUMINOUS REPORTING INSIDE CONCENTRATED ESSENTIALLY ON
DETAILS. THE PAPER'S LEAD EDITORIAL HOWEVER ANALYZED WHITE
HOUSE WIRE- TAPPING MOTIVES WITH A BROAD BRUSH, SECONDED BY
COLUMNIST TOM WICKER. COLUMNIST JAMES RESTON CONCENTRATED
ON THE EFFECT OF THE WHITE HOUSE " SYSTEM" IN PARTICULAR
RELATION TO HELMS AND KISSINGER.

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AS REPORTED BY THE TIMES, THE PRINCIPAL DEVELOPMENTS OF THE DAY WERE THESE:

1) MAGRUDER ORDERED A FILE WHICH APPARENTLY CONTAINED POLITICAL INTELLIGENCE REMOVED FROM HIS DESK HOURS AFTER THE WATERGATE BURGLARY, ACCORDING TO TESTIMONY BEFORE THE SENATE COMMITTEE. SO FAR AS IS KNOWN THE DOCUMENTS CONTAINED IN IT HAVE NEVER BEEN FOUND BY INVESTIGATORS,

2) RICHARDSON ISSUED A DETAILED SET OF GUIDELINES FOR WHOMEVER IS CHOSEN AS SPECIAL WATERGATE PROSECUTOR. RICHARDSON SAID THE PROSECUTOR WOULD BE GIVEN " FULL AUTHORITY FOR INVESTIGATING AND PROSECUTING OFFENSES AGAINST THE UNITED STATES " ARISING OUT OF THE WATERGATE BURGLARY, AND THAT HE WOULD ALSO HANDLE " ALL OFFENSES ARISING OUT OF THE 1972 PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION".

3) IN AN AFFIDAVIT MADE PUBLIC TODAY, GENERAL WALTERS SAID THAT L. PATRICK GRAY TOLD HIM ALMOST A YEAR AGO HE HAD RECOMMENDED THAT ALL THOSE INVOLVED IN WATERGATE SHOULD BE DISCHARGED. GEN. WALTERS SAID GRAY TOLD HIM HE WAS PREPARED TO RESIGN OVER APPARENT WHITE HOUSE EFFORTS TO IMPLICATE THE CIA AND THE FBI IN COVERING UP THE WATERGATE OPERATION.

4) UNDERSECRETARY OF STATE CASEY SAID HE HAD NO KNOWLEDGE OF ANY WRONGDOING IN THE SEC'S HANDLING OF A FRAUD CASE AGAINST VESCO WHEN CASEY WAS SEC CHAIRMAN. IN A STATEMENT QUOTED BY UPI DATED WASHINGTON, CASEY SAID HE HAD NO INTENTION OF RESIGNING FROM THE DEPARTMENT. HE ADDED THAT HE HAD BEEN AWARE OF THE SEC INVESTIGATION OF VESCO, BUT THAT HE HAD NO KNOWLEDGE THAT \$250,000 INVOLVED IN THE CASE WAS ACTUALLY AN UNREPORTED CONTRIBUTION TO NIXON'S RE-ELECTION CAMPAIGN.

IN A LEAD EDITORIAL HEADED " WEB OF SUSPICION", THE TIMES COMMENTED: " WHITE HOUSE ACKNOWLEDGMENT THAT THE PRESIDENT ORDERED WIRETAPS ON THIRTEEN NATIONAL SECURITY AIDES AND FOUR NEWSMEN -- REPORTEDLY AT THE PERSONAL INSTIGATION OF HENRY KISSINGER IN SOME CASES -- OFFERS FURTHER DISMAYING EVIDENCE
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OF THE DEGREE TO WHICH INDIVIDUAL LIBERTIES AND THE INTEGRITY OF THE EXECUTIVE BRANCH ITSELF HAVE BEEN COMPROMISED UNDER THE CLIMATE OF SELF-RIGHTEOUS SECRECY AND SUSPICION IN WHICH THE NIXON ADMINISTRATION HAS OPERATED...."

THE EDITORIAL CONTINUED: " AS HAS SO OFTEN PROVED THE CASE WITH THIS AND PREVIOUS ADMINISTRATIONS, THE SECRECY THAT

THE WHITE HOUSE SOUGHT TO IMPOSE THROUGH HIGHLY DUBIOUS MEANS SEEMS TO HAVE BEEN AIMED MORE AT PRESERVING ITS OWN INTERESTS THAN THE NATIONAL INTEREST". TOM WICKER WROTE: " THERE IS NO ACCEPTABLE EXPLANATION EVEN OF THE BEGINNINGS OF THIS SORDID WHITE HOUSE PRACTICE OF SPYING ON ITS OWN EMPLOYEES AND ON REPUTABLE NEWS REPORTERS ... THIS DIRTY BUSINESS TELLS MUCH -- PERHAPS MORE THAN ANY WITNESS SO FAR -- ABOUT HOW THE CHAIN OF ' WATERGATE' EVENTS COULD HAVE HAPPENED".

RESTON, UNDER THE HEADING " KISSINGER AND HELMS" HAD THIS TO SAY ABOUT THE " DON' T CALL ME" CLOSED- CIRCUIT SYSTEM IN THE WHITE HOUSE: " HOW COULD MR. KISSINGER AGREE TO BUGGING HIS OWN FRIENDS AND COLLEAGUES ON THE NSC STAFF IN THE WHITE HOUSE, IT IS ASKED. AND HOW COULD RICHARD HELMS, FORMER HEAD OF THE CIA, ALLOW THE AGENCY TO BE USED IN A DOMESTIC CONSPIRACY, WITHOUT CHALLENGING THE WHITE HOUSE STAFF AND EXPRESSING HIS DOUBTS AND OBJECTIONS DIRECTLY TO THE PRESIDENT?...

" ONE HAS TO BE VERY CAREFUL WITH THIS DISCUSSION OF POWER, AMBITION, LOYALTY AND MORALITY. IT INVOLVES DELICATE MOTIVES AND PRIVATE PHILOSOPHIES AND CALCULATIONS NO OUTSIDER CAN POSSIBLY KNOW. FOR EXAMPLE, BEFORE HE LEFT WASHINGTON FOR PARIS TO TRY TO SAVE THE VIETNAM PEACE AGREEMENT, MR. KISSINGER MADE CLEAR TO GENERAL HAIG AND OTHERS IN THE WHITE HOUSE -- ONE SOURCE SAYD ALSO TO THE PRESIDENT PERSONALLY -- THAT IF HIS MORAL AUTHORITY WAS IN QUESTION AS A RESULT OF HIS PART IN THE TELEPHONE BUGS OF HIS OWN STAFF, THEN HE WOULD RESIGN AT ONCE ...

" THERE ARE NO RULES THAT SAY KISSINGER AND HELMS CANNOT DEFEY THE SYSTEM AND INSIST ON CONFRONTING THE PRESIDENT, BUT IT IS HARD TO REMEMBER A MAN AROUND WASHINGTON IN THE LAST GENERATION WHO WALKED INTO THE OVAL ROOM OF THE WHITE UNCLASSIFIED

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HOUSE AND CHALLENGED THE PRESIDENT, HIS POLICIES AND HIS STAFF....

" IT TAKES A BOLD MAN TO TELL THE PRESIDENT AND HIS STAFF THE TRUTH, NO MATTER HOW MUCH IT HURTS. AND THIS MR. NIXON HAS DISCOURAGED FROM THE TIME HE WALKED INTO THE WHITE HOUSE".

THE TIMES CARRIED ON PAGE TWO WIRE STORIES DATELINED BOGOTA AND LIMA ABOUT SECRETARY ROGERS' TRIP. THE BOGOTA STORY FROM AP EMPHASIZED STUDENT DEMONSTRATIONS IN COLOMBIA AND FROM LIMA REUTER REPORTED THAT THE SECRETARY CONFIRMED PRESIDENT NIXON PLANNED TO VISIT LATIN AMERICA LATE THIS YEAR OR EARLY NEXT. SCALI UNQUOTE RUSH

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NMAFVVZCZ

*** Current Handling Restrictions *** n/a

*** Current Classification *** UNCLASSIFIED

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: OPERATIONS CENTER FOR SECRETARY S PA
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 18 MAY 1973
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: n/a
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01 JAN 1960
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1973STATE095281
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: O: WNEWLIN
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: n/a
Errors: n/a
Film Number: n/a
From: SECSTATE WASHDC
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1973/newtext/t19730549/aaaajmrt.tel
Line Count: 170
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Office: ORIGIN SS
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 4
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: willialc
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 29 OCT 2001
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <29-Oct-2001 by daviscw>; APPROVED <20 FEB 2002 by willialc>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: <DBA CORRECTED> mcm 980224
Subject: NEW YORK TIMES SUMMARY MAY 18
TAGS: PFOR, (ROGERS WILLIAM P)
To: BOGOTA
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005